

PLANTING SEEDS OF WELLNESS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & HEALTH EQUITY

2015 Annual Report & Project Summary

Project FY July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2015



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Mecklenburg County Health Department
P 980 314 9027 • www.meckhealth.org • www.villagehb.org

OVERVIEW

Why Consider Population-Based Interventions?

Prevention Rationale

The demographics and population growth of Mecklenburg County are changing and becoming increasingly more diverse. Success depends on building community engagement, ongoing communication and collaboration and a shared commitment to achieving the Mecklenburg County Vision: "Mecklenburg County will be a community of pride and choice for people to LIVE, WORK and RECREATE." The vision requires reorientation of our individual and collective thinking, policies, programs and resource allocations toward the goal of healthy living for everyone in Mecklenburg County.

The Community Engagement and Health Equity is a newly created division for the Mecklenburg County Health Department. The vision is to promote health equity in racial and ethnic minority populations and socially disadvantaged communities through community inclusion, research, training, and to disseminate lessons learned to inform policy and systems change.

The vision is guided by a multi-prong framework that integrates the following:

1 Social determinants approach that recognizes the role of social factors and structural determinants in the production of health disparities and inequities.

2 Health in all policy approach that includes stakeholders from multiple sectors (both health and non-health) in developing shared strategies that promote health equity and applies a participatory (population-based) action approach.

3 Asset-building strategies that build on community and individual assets and resources for reducing health disparities and promoting health equity.



Executive Summary/ Brief Milestones

I am pleased to share a sampling of the depth and breadth of our multi-faceted initiatives and programs in this report. The Community Engagement and Health Equity reached more than 11,000 individuals and families. A common theme will emerge as you explore the following pages: Our Health, Our Priority, Our Community. Together, we can accomplish what none of us can achieve alone.

It is truly an honor to be part of this great work. I look forward to continuing our partnership with our communities to promote inclusion, health equity, and reduce health disparities in Mecklenburg County.

FY 2015 PRELIMINARY MILESTONES

FY 2015 - Strategic Plan Goal 7:

Create a data informed health disparities strategy.

Priority Area #1

Chronic Disease Intervention: Village HeartBEAT

- There were 235 individuals across 16 churches with mid- and post-intervention data. Of these, 63 had mid-intervention data and 3 had a full panel of questionable data values, leaving 169 with usable post-intervention data. Thus, for your purposes and as we discussed, n=169 will be used as the denominator.

Using 169 as the denominator, 98.8% of these VHB participants had an improvement in at least one health outcome.

- Achieve a customer service satisfaction rating of at least 89% Evidence- paper/on-line customer service surveys

CUSTOMER SERVICE RATING 99%

- Conduct outreach activities that reach target populations.

>10,000 (ESTIMATED TRACKING N=11,416)

Outreach - Target reached of participants

Evidence - Photo- Video Journaling



VILLAGE HEARTBEAT COMPONENTS:

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|--|
| • Pre and Post Biometric Screening | • Evidence –based tools: With Every Heart Beat | • Healthy Cooking Demonstrations |
| • 5k Walk/Run | • CPR Certification | • Custom Exercise Plans with Fitness Workshops |
| • Smoking Cessation Classes | • Nutrition Course with Food Journaling | |
| • Prevention and Policy Training | | |

THE HEALTH OUTCOMES INCLUDE:

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| • Reduced Weight - 62.1% | • Reduced Percent Body Fat - 69.2% | • Increased Hydration - 39.1% |
| • Reduced Systolic Blood Pressure - 50.3% | • Increased Lean Muscle Mass - 60.4% | • Smoking Cessation Program - 9 Participants Quit |
| • Reduced Diastolic Blood Pressure - 52.7% | • Reduced Fat Mass - 67.5% | |

Priority Area #2

Intervention: Health Equity Training (Internal Capacity)

Facilitate and convene the department's first internal health equity introductory training session involving mid-level managers across all MCHD departments (May 2015).

Priority Area #3


Intervention: Health Equity Coalition (External Capacity)

Facilitate and convene key stakeholders to create a road map to address community health equity through inclusion, community engagement, empowerment, awareness, and capacity.


Evaluation and Data Management Activities

Data collected in a variety of ways: Audiotaped, , transcriptions, video- taping, Photo-journal , Surveys, Customer Service Surveys Master List of VHB Participants: For fidelity measures, the MCHD will hold the master list of participants' names. They will receive codes that will be used on forms. Each participant will receive their number, which will be used in coordination with the partner in the clinics and health leaders in the communities.

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES BY MONTH

<div>PROMOTE</div> <div></div>	July 2014 - December 2014	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Participant Summary
	Activities: Chronic Disease Awareness Workshops, Physical Activity, Nutrition Classes & Weight Management, Affordable Healthcare Act Workshop, Teen Health Camp	Number Workshops/Training Outreach Activities, Partial Listing:						
ACTIVITIES, PARTIAL LISTING: Riches Community Training, Factors of the Seven, DHHS Novant Health Pastoral Education Congregational Training - (9 FBOs') Faces to Faces Poverty Town Hall Strategy Session Covenant Presbyterian Hospital/NCCAA CN Jenkins Fitness Blast Pride Sunset Jazz New Life Community Center Health Festival Friendship Missionary Baptist Church Men's Health Program and Screening Young Stroke Conference Program and Screening American Heart Association Training Bethesda Zumba Thon Pastors Roundtable World AIDS Day Partnership	20	15	15	16	12	24	Total Activities: 82	
	279	486	552	535	1176	Total # Participants = 3,028		

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES BY MONTH

	January 2015 - June 2015	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Participant Summary
	Activities: Chronic Disease Awareness Workshops, Physical Activity, Nutrition Classes & Weight Management, Affordable Healthcare Act Workshop, Teen Health Camp	Number Workshops/Training Outreach Activities, Partial Listing:						
ACTIVITIES, PARTIAL LISTING: Village Heart BEAT Orientation Training VHB- Bi-Monthly Workshops/Training Sessions Go RED- Heart Disease Month- BOCC Awareness Women Health Conference VHB - CPR Training American Cancer Society, African Research Study-Outreach/Recruitment,Recognized as Charlotte Ambassador Fitness on the Greenway Old North State Medical Conference Public Health Awareness Day Hearts of Champions Gala UNCC Health Disparities Conference	42	41	68	63	54	4	Total Activities: 272 Total # Participants = 8,181 Total # Participants for July 2013-June 2014 11,209 - Total Activities - 354	
	490	180	2135	2426	2780	170		

MILESTONES

- APHA Poster Abstract- Nov 2015
- Article Published in North Carolina Institute of Medicine
- Featured on WTVI PBS Charlotte
- Nationally recognized by *Million Hearts® All Agencies, presented by Sharon L. Ricks, MA, Deputy Regional Health Administrator. Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Region IV*
- 9 Village HeartBEAT smoking cessation participants successfully quit smoking
- Village HeartBEAT is currently partnered with over 20 faith-based organizations



Village HeartBEAT Workshops & Workouts



Partnership List/ Stakeholder Team, Partial List



PARTNER NAME	SERVICE CATEGORY
World Reach, Inc. DBA Bethesda Health Center	Patient Centered Medical Home (Health Screening Site and Bilingual Translation)
Novant Health – Pastoral Education Department	Host Monthly Update Meetings - Community Health Services and Education - Linkages to Partnership with Mid-Carolinas Cardiology Group - Educational Resources
Village HeartBEAT Church Network Fitness Challenge	Project Core - Community Outreach and Training 1. Camino Del Rey Baptist 2. First Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist 3. Grier Heights Presbyterian 4. New Friendship Presbyterian 5. Faith CME Church 6. Greater Salem Church 7. New Covenant Bibleway 8. CN Jenkins Presbyterian Church 9. Shiloh Institutional Baptist 10. Ben Salem Presbyterian Church 11. First Baptist West 12. New Zion Missionary Baptist Church 13. Caldwell Presbyterian 14. New Life Fellowship Center 15. Rockwell A.M.E. Zion 16. 15th Street Church of God 17. City Dive Outreach Center 18. Wilson Heights Church of God
Delta of Charlotte Foundation	Community Outreach, Focus Group Facilitation, Training, Resource Development
Zuri Creative Group, LLC	Community Outreach 1. Designs Tools & Resources 2. Social Media & Marketing
American Heart Association	Coordinated Medic CPR Training
House of NC, INC.	Training/Physical Activity Certified Healthy Living Curriculum
JCSU Healthplex	Site Coordination, Fitness Greenway, Annual Field Day
Gramercy Research	Program Evaluation, Education Resources
Old North State Medical Society	Program Evaluation, Education Resources
UNC Chapel Hill	Program Evaluation, Education Resources
UNCC	Program Evaluation, Education Resources



Qcityhealth

JANUARY 6, 2015
www.qcitymetro.com

Battling obesity and high cholesterol

By Glenn Burkins



Women from Shiloh Institutional Baptist Church, all members of a Village HeartBEAT wellness program, take part in a 6 a.m. water aerobics class at the McCrorey YMCA. (Photo: Glenn H. Burkins for Qcitymetro.com)

Today Qcitymetro kicks off a series celebrating people who have made a decision to get healthier by enrolling in Village HeartBEAT, a 16-week wellness program designed to reduce risk factors, especially in the African American and Latino communities. The program, now in its third year, is sponsored by the Mecklenburg County Health Department and works primarily with local churches.

Name: Kathy Cuttino

Church: Shiloh Institutional Baptist Church

Health Factors: High cholesterol and excess weight

Her Story: Cuttino moved to Charlotte from Greenville, S.C., in 2011. She came to care for her aging mother, who died nearly a year ago. Over the years, Cuttino says, her weight crept up to 280

pounds, mainly the result of poor diet and inactivity. She joined Village HeartBEAT (along with 15 others from her church) looking to lose weight and stay healthy. Cuttino said she's now exercising more, dining out less and consuming healthier foods – plenty of vegetables, fruits and grains. On a recent December morning,



Kathy Cuttino

Cuttino and other women from her church were at a 6 a.m. water aerobics class at the McCrorey YMCA. (Cuttino is team captain and says it's her role to keep others motivated.) Since she started exercising and eating better, her weight has dropped to about 220 pounds. Cuttino said her goal is to get down to about 200 pounds.

Her Philosophy: "You've got to keep it going. Yes, you are going to fall off that wagon, but you've got to keep it going."

Her Quotes: "There are too many of us who know what we are supposed to do, but we don't do it...We don't know about portion control. We'll put stuff on a plate, the plate is full, and we'll go back and get seconds."

Impressive Fact: With exercise, an improved diet, and medication, Cuttino says her cholesterol level has dropped from 329 to 220.

In Closing: "I feel great," she said. "I really do."



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Qcityhealth

MARCH 3, 2015
www.qcitymetro.com

Donald Faulkner: A smoker no more

By Adriana Burkins

This article is part of a continuing series celebrating local residents who have made a decision to get healthier by enrolling in Village HeartBEAT, a 16-week wellness program designed to reduce risk factors, especially in the African American and Latino communities. The program, now in its third year, is sponsored by the Mecklenburg County Health Department and works primarily with local churches.

Name: Donald Faulkner

Church: Ben Salem Presbyterian Church

Health Factors: COPD and emphysema, due to smoking

His story: After nearly 40 years of smoking, Donald Faulkner decided to quit – cold turkey – on Thanksgiving Day 2014. Since then, Faulkner says, he has not touched another cigarette, though he's had urges.

Faulkner, 64, said his biggest source of support has been his fellow Village HeartBEAT teammates at Ben Salem Presbyterian Church. He joined the program two years ago with a goal of getting more exercise and developing better eating habits. But somewhere along the way he decided to also kick the smoking habit.

The tipping point came last year during Thanksgiving when Faulkner's son expressed concerns about the effects that



*After nearly 40 years of smoking, Donald Faulkner, 64, decided to quit – cold turkey – on Thanksgiving Day 2014.
(Photo: Adriana Burkins for Qcitymetro.com)*

second-hand smoke would have on an unborn grandchild his daughter-in-law was carrying. Later that night, Faulkner said, he flushed all of his cigarettes down the toilet.

Smoking secession is a new area of focus for Village HeartBEAT, which is now in its third year. In previous years, participants focused primarily on exercise and nutrition. Faulkner said the program made him question why he was exercising and working to prolong his life in one way but killing himself in another.

Faulkner, whose lungs have been damaged, said he could barely walk from his house to the end of his driveway without losing his breath. The problem

progressed to the point that he even had trouble talking on the phone for long periods of time.

Faulkner said the urges still come, especially in the early morning, but he knows the desire eventually will pass. "I don't have to yield to that urge," he said, "so it's really a mental thing."

In addition to giving up cigarettes, Faulkner said he's also eating less often and eating smaller portions. He's moved from fried foods to baked foods, and to more vegetables instead of meat.

"My team, Ben Salem's team, has been my biggest support," he said. "I've been feeling real well."

His advice to smokers: "I just want them to know how good it feels to not be a smoker. Because I'm sure at one point in their life they wanted to be off cigarettes, and when they succeed in that, it feels so good."

Closing thoughts: "I feel more better mentally than I do physically. Just to know that I'm in the process of this accomplishment, and I've been wanting to be in this process for so long, and I'm here. I'm in it.



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Qcityhealth

MARCH 16, 2015
www.qcitymetro.com

A 'second birthday' for Henrietta McClain

By Adriana Burkins



After three years on dialysis, Henrietta McClain says she is now doing fine, thanks to a donor kidney. The experience has focused her attention on health. (Photo: Glenn H. Burkins, Qcitymetro.com)

This article is part of a series celebrating local people who have made a decision to get healthier by enrolling in Village HeartBEAT, a 16-week wellness program designed to reduce risk factors, especially in the African American and Latino communities. The program, now in its third year, is sponsored by the Mecklenburg County Health Department and works primarily with local churches.

Name: Henrietta McClain

Church: First Baptist Church-West

Risk factors: Kidney failure due to high-blood pressure

Her Story: Almost every weekday, Henrietta McClain can be found somewhere getting in her exercise, often at the Johnson C. Smith University HealthPlex, where fitness instructors know her by name.

McClain has a good reason for her focus on health. In August 2006, she underwent a kidney transplant – an event she now marks as her second birthday.

McClain said she developed high-blood pressure in her 20s, which led to kidney failure. The transplant, she says, was like a miracle.

She had been on dialysis for three years. Instead of receiving dialysis in a medical

center, McClain chose to go through the treatments in her home. This required inserting a tube into her abdomen every night to flush out the toxins in her blood. She said her children, her church and her job kept her going through those difficult years.

This year marks her second year as a Village HeartBEAT participant. McClain says her blood pressure is now at a normal level and her kidneys work "great." To stay fit, she follows a fitness regimen that includes cardio exercises, circuit training, line dancing and healthy eating.

Her advice: "Take medication. I think that's very important because I have to take mine for the rest of my life to prevent my body from rejecting the kidney. People are surprised about the number and quantity of drugs that an organ transplant patient must take everyday. And keep active. If you can get in any programs that can help you...keep active, do that."

Importance of donors: "Organ donors can give the gift of love and life. Someone donated a kidney to me, so I feel really strong on that. I'm an organ donor, and I advise my children to do so. You don't realize the importance of it until you get sick."



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Qcityhealth

MAY 20, 2015

www.qcitymetro.com

A family commits to healthier living

By Adriana Burkins



For Sylvia and Melvin Austin, losing weight and adopting a healthier lifestyle has become a family goal. (Photo: Adriana Burkins for Qcitymetro.com)

Names: Sylvia and Melvin Austin

Church: New Life Fellowship Center

Health Factors: Obesity, medication for blood pressure and a desire to become fit. Their story: For Melvin Austin, it began as a need to get in shape and get well. For Sylvia Austin, it began as a choice to support her husband of 14 years, who is battling obesity and taking blood pressure and water pills. In the year since the couple joined the Village HeartBEAT program at their church, they've experienced some changes, both individually and as a family.

Mr. Austin, who has gone from 399 pounds to 370 pounds, said the hardest part for him has been finding time to

exercise. As a truck driver, he doesn't work a 9-to-5 schedule, so he walks whenever he can. He said his favorite thing is sleeping after a workout.

Mrs. Austin, who won the "biggest loser" competition at her church with a loss of 20-23 pounds, said the hardest thing for her has been eating right. Before the program, she often ate just one large meal a day. They both agreed that the program has forced them to spread out their meals, to actually put things on plates and ensure proper serving sizes.

Aside from the pounds, Mr. Austin said he's able to move around better, has more energy and stamina and sleeps better. Mrs. Austin said the program has given her a "burst of energy" to keep up



with their three girls, ages 4, 7 and 9, who join their parents on exercise walks.

The couple said their biggest source of support has been their team members and coach, who will text or call to check on them and let them know about class locations.

Their advice: "You've got to stick with it...and being consistent and trying to be self-motivated, that's the hardest thing. When you start off with a team and others go another way, you've got to fend for yourself...so you've really got to have that motivation."

Quote: "You have about a million dollars around your belly. You didn't get it over night, so you've got a big investment that you're trying to get rid of, so it's gonna take a little time."



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Qcityhealth

MAY 7, 2015

www.qcitymetro.com

For Karen Rockhead, getting fit is a gradual process

By Adriana Burkins

This article is part of a continuing series celebrating local residents who have made a decision to get healthier by enrolling in Village HeartBEAT, a 16-week wellness program designed to reduce risk factors, especially in the African American and Latino communities. The program, now in its third year, is sponsored by the Mecklenburg County Health Department and works primarily with local churches.

Name: Karen Rockhead

Church: New Zion Baptist Church

Health Factors: Weight and family

history of diabetes

Her Story: As a nurse in the Charlotte area, Karen Rockhead has seen how diabetes, heart disease and stroke are all associated with obesity and inactive. So three years ago, to help improve her own health, she joined the Village HeartBEAT program at her church. Diabetes runs in Rockhead's family, and in recent years she's been battling to lose weight. By joining in with others at her church, she figured she'd stand a better chance of success.

The most difficult part so far has been

finding time for exercise. She sometimes walks on her lunch breaks or after work. She also has exercise equipment at home, and when she wants a cardio workout, she pops in a tape. Sometimes her four children join her in walks, a game of basketball or even a race to the car when they're out and about.

Rockhead says the easiest change has been making better food choices. She uses a portion-control plate and salad bowl to measure her intake, and she's learned healthier ways to cook by attending cooking demonstrations. Turkey chops are now a favorite on the menu. And to avoid empty calories, she's drinking more water instead of sweet drinks.

Gradually, Rockhead has seen weight loss and an increase in energy. Her biggest source of support has been her Village HeartBEAT church members who are always looking out for each other and holding one another accountable.

Her advice: "Don't give up, be consistent and don't expect quick changes, because one or two pounds a week is a healthy weight loss. Just make small changes, and then you will see the bigger picture."



For Karen Rockhead, getting fit is a gradual process. The Charlotte-area nurse says she was aware of how diabetes, heart disease and stroke are all associated with obesity and inactivity.
(Photo: Adriana Burkins)



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Qcityhealth

APRIL 15, 2015
www.qcitymetro.com

Amelia Smith: Finding time in her busy schedule to exercise

By Adriana Burkins

This article is part of a continuing series celebrating local residents who have made a decision to get healthier by enrolling in Village HeartBEAT, a 16-week wellness program designed to reduce risk factors, especially in the African American and Latino communities. The program, now in its third year, is sponsored by the Mecklenburg County Health Department and works primarily with local churches.

Name: Amelia Smith

Church: Greater Salem Church

Interest in Village HeartBEAT: Fitness and learning about potential health risks
Her story: If you want to catch Amelia Smith, you'd better lace up your walking shoes. The retired accounting technician says she doesn't slow her pace for anyone, not even her husband, who sometimes walks with her.

"He just can't keep up with me," she joked. "I've always walked fast."

Qcitymetro caught up with Smith at the Johnson C. Smith University HealthPlex, where she exercises each week with her Greater Salem Church teammates.

Smith joined Village HeartBEAT three years ago. Before that, she would walk around her neighborhood "off and on." Smith remembered that during her first year in the program she lost the most weight in her group. She gained some of it back then lost it again. This year, the Greater Salem team is looking to win the weight-loss category.

Despite being retired, finding time for exercise remains a challenge, says Smith, who helps care for an aging mother. But despite her busy pace, she has made staying fit a priority.

Smith said she especially enjoys water aerobics and yoga, the latter of which she described as "excellent." "It just makes me feel so good," she said. Although Smith has been taking care of her mother and hasn't been able to exercise as often as she would like, she has a plethora of exercise DVDs at home.

From the team captain: Denise Cathey, the Village HeartBEAT captain of Greater Salem, said she likes Smith because of her consistency. The team started out with about 30 people, but over time, all



Amelia Smith, a retired accounting technician, is part of the Village HeartBEAT team at Greater Salem Church. Her team leader calls her a model of consistency. (Photo: Glenn H. Burkins for Qcitymetro.com)

but 12 drifted away. Cathey said Smith is quick to volunteer and set an example for others. "She's walking every Saturday. Every Monday she's here. Through the years I've seen a person who's grown...who wants to lose weight."



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Qcityhealth

JANUARY 15, 2015
www.qcitymetro.com

Walking to end a family history of hypertension



Janice Mosse, left, and her daughter, Lenda Moss, joined other members of Village HeartBEAT in a four-lap walk around the lake at Freedom Park. Janice Moss said her goal is to get off the blood pressure medications she has been taking for about 10 years. (Photo: Glenn H. Burkins)

After a Saturday morning workout in Freedom Park, participants in the Village HeartBEAT fitness program circle for prayer. (Photo: Glenn H. Burkins)

By Glenn Burkins

Qcitymetro this month kicked off a series profiling people who decided to get healthier by enrolling in Village HeartBEAT, a 16-week wellness program designed to reduce risk factors, especially in the African American and Latino communities. The program, now in its third year, is sponsored by the Mecklenburg County Health Department and works primarily through local churches. This is our second installment:

Name: Janice Moss

Church: Ben-Salem Presbyterian Church

Risk Factors: High blood pressure (hypertension) and obesity

Her Story: For about 10 years Moss has been taking medications to lower her blood pressure. Hypertension, she says,

runs in her family. She'd like to get off those medicines (and lose some weight), so last year she enrolled in Village HeartBEAT. Since then she has been walking, exercising and visiting a gym with members of her church family. Qcitymetro found her on a frigid Saturday morning (28 degrees) walking around the lake (four laps) in Freedom Park with her daughter, Lenda Moss, and other Village HeartBEAT participants. Janice said she invited her entire family to join her along this fitness journey but only Lenda accepted the challenge. "I promised my daughter I would help her," the mother said. "We're getting on this thing together. Plus, she's going to be in a wedding, and I want her to be bam-bam in that dress." Janice Moss said she is helped in her motivation by working out with others. As for weight loss, she said she'd like to lose about 50 pounds.

Quote: You can't sit back and think the weight is going to fall off and you are

going to get off the pills. You've got to keep going, do something, keep moving." Challenge: Although she exercises regularly, Janice Moss said she still has not modified her diet, which she knows she should do. "I've got to say I'm falling short on that," she said. "I kind of like eat what I want and not worry about it."



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Qcityhealth

APRIL 1, 2015
www.qcitymetro.com

Sometimes it takes a Village to make a difference.

By Adriana Burkins

Name: Rev. Jacob Teasdell

Age: 54

Church: Faith CME Church

Health Factors: Obesity; medications for diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure

His story: For Rev. Jacob Teasdell of Faith CME Church, the journey to lose weight has been a "family affair," and he credits his church and his Village HeartBEAT team for being his biggest source of support. Teasdell once weighed 350 pounds and was under medication for diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure. Then, about 10 years ago, a close friend suffered a heart attack and died. Teasdell decided to make a change. He went to a doctor, saying, "keep me alive 'til I'm 50." Although health issues run in his family, it wasn't until that doctor visit that Teasdell really learned the extent of what he was dealing with.

Teasdell has lost weight before – 10-15 pounds in a couple of weeks – but it always came back. In the Village HeartBEAT program, he said, he is encouraged to make lifestyle changes and focus on losing smaller amounts over extended periods. The key, he said, is sustainability.

Teasdell said he appreciates his team because they care for him and support him. He said that "without fail," his team captains track and record his exercise regimen, his weight loss and provide healthy eating tips.



At 350 pounds, Rev. Jacob Teasdell knew he needed to make some changes. But after a friend had a heart attack and passed away, he went to a doctor, saying, "keep me alive 'til I'm 50." (Photo: Adriana Burkins)

Since becoming serious about his weight loss this year, Teasdell has gone from 355 pounds to 338; his goal is to lose between 40-50 pounds. Although he still takes medication for high cholesterol, high blood pressure and diabetes, he said his biggest challenge has been time. He works in the chemistry department at a nuclear power plant in York County, and his days are long. Still, he tries to get in 2-3 miles of walking and between 20-30 minutes on his exercise bike. He said he is excited about where he is, where he is going to be and for the longer days and warmer weather that comes with spring.

His trick: Village HeartBEAT encourages its participants to use smaller plates to help control portion sizes. That didn't work for Teasdell, so he started using small Tupperware containers to carry his food. "It's a small container, so it looks like it's full...but you're not eating as much, so that makes it easier to manage your portions."

His advice: "Don't feel like you have to do the entire program. Take bites and pieces of what you can do and consistently do them...and you'll be able to do more."



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Village HeartBEAT

Building Education & Accountability Together
A Mecklenburg County Initiative



Casita De Amor Caldwell Presbyterian church
Senior Pastor John Craighorn, Pastor Everdith Landrau



Camino Community Center- Pastor Russell Price



New Zion Missionary Baptist Church - Rev. Henry Williams



Faith CME Church - Pastor Laura Wilson



Shiloh Institutional Baptist Church - Dr. Ricky A. Woods



First Baptist West Church - Dr. Ricky A. Woods



Greater Salem Church - Bishop Allen G. Porter



Greenville AME Zion Church



Grier Heights Presbyterian - Pastor Larry James



Rockwell A.M.E. Zion Church - Pastor Jordan Boyd



Hispanos Unidos



New Life Fellowship Center - Pastor John P. Kee



New Covenant BibleWay



The Living Church



First Mt. Zion Baptist Church - Rev. Jonathan E. Edwards



Ben Salem Presbyterian Church - Rev. Damiko Faulkner